

Steens Mountain Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

March 3 and 4, 2002

Members Present:

Hoyt Wilson, Grazing Permittee, Princeton, Oregon
Mike Golden, Dispersed Recreation, Redmond, Oregon
Jerry Sutherland, Vice Chair, Environmental Representative – Statewide,
Portland, Oregon
Tom Harris, Chair, Mechanized or Consumptive Recreation, Keno, Oregon
Alice Elshoff, Environmental Representative – Local, Frenchglen, Oregon
Wanda Johnson, Burns Paiute Tribe, Burns, Oregon
Stacy Davies, Grazing Permittee, Frenchglen, Oregon
Cynthia Witzel, Recreation Permit Holder, Frenchglen, Oregon
E. Ron Harding, Wild Horse Management, Burns, Oregon
Harland Yriarte, Private Landowner, Eugene, Oregon
Richard Benner, No Financial Interest
Jason Miner, Fish and Recreational Fishing, Portland, Oregon

Members Absent:

Steve Purchase, State Liaison, Salem, Oregon

Designated Federal Official (DFO):

Tom Dyer, Burns District Manager, Bureau of Land Management (BLM),
Hines, Oregon

Designated Federal Official Assistants:

Rhonda Karges, Management Support Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Liz Appelman, Budget Analyst, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Tara Wilson, Public Affairs Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon

Presenters:

Jon Collins, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Gary Foulkes, District Planning & Environmental Coordinator, BLM, Hines, OR
Mark Sherbourne, Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
John Neeling, Wilderness Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Dave Harmon, Wilderness Specialist, BLM, Oregon State Office
Jim Buchanan, Range Management Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon

Facilitator:

Dale White

Commenting Public:

Susan Hammond, Hammond Ranches	Jesse Laird, Lakeview permittee
C.M. Otley, Diamond Valley Ranch, Inc.	Jerry Miller, Rancher
Fred Otley, Rancher	Josh Warburton, Oregon Hunters
Harold Belisle, BLM, OR/WA State Office	Dale Neubauer, citizen
John Witzel, Steens Mountain Packers	Jenny Otley

Others Present:

Larry Bartee, Senator Gordon Smith	Karla Bird, BLM
Richard Day, Community Response Team	Barbara Cannady, Capitol Press
Brent Fenty, OR Natural Desert Assoc.	Ed Davis
Jack Rinn, property owners in general	Gary Miller
Alan Mauer, USFWS	Nancy Gilbert, USFWS
Larry Otley	Don Renie
Jen Otley	Pam Hardy, University of Oregon
Jimmy Zamora, Burns High School	Deborah Hickey
Tim Walters, ODFW	Glen Patterson, BLM
Sandy Berain, BLM	Manny Berain, BLM
Jim King, BLM	Patti Wilson, BLM
Kelly Hazen, BLM	Darren Brumback, BLM
Nick Miller, BLM	Joe Glascock, BLM
Scott Thomas, BLM	Michael Weston, BLM
Matt Obradovich, BLM	Evelyn Treiman, BLM
Jill Benefield, BLM	Carolyn Freeborn, BLM
Cam Swisher, BLM	

Welcome, Introductions, Housekeeping and Agenda

The meeting was called to order, introductions made, and the agenda reviewed.

Chairman Update:

Tom Harris briefed the SMAC on the positions expiring in August. The positions are Fish and Recreational Fishing, State Environmental Rep., Private Landowner, and Recreational Permit Holder.

DFO Update:

Tom Dyer introduced Karla Bird who is the new Andrews Field Manager and will begin March 10.

He talked about the National Wild Horse and Burro meeting in Phoenix. The major issues are the drought, fire, and too many horses have been gathered and BLM is now trying to get them adopted.

The Steens Mountain Running Camp decision is final. BLM did not receive any appeals/protests.

Tom readdressed the Three Springs Road issue and presented a map depicting the area. The road appears on the legislative maps, but crosses through wilderness. Tom asked the SMAC to make a recommendation to help rectify this problem.

Motion made and seconded to adjust the wilderness boundary at the start of the Three Springs Road to correct a mapping error (Alice moved, Stacy seconded)

Consensus Decision: Adjust the wilderness boundary at the start of the Three Springs Road to correct a mapping error.

Tom Dyer requested all SMAC members to sign the map depicting the Three Springs Road and certify their agreement to the adjustment of the wilderness boundary clarification.

Jerry brought to the SMAC's attention the \$5,000,000 requested from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was not appropriated. Jerry asked did the SMAC miss something; why hasn't it happened; and is someone not on board with the process? Stacy did not know of anyone within Harney County who was against the bill.

Motion made and seconded to write a letter to the OR/WA State Director with courtesy copies to the Oregon delegation regarding LWCF funding. Send the same letter as was sent on April 4, 2002, but change the date. (Stacy moved, Tom Harris seconded)

Consensus Decision: Write letter to OR/WA State Director with courtesy copies to the Oregon delegation regarding LWCF funding.

Motion made and seconded that SMAC members can represent the SMAC at meetings with their constituents when discussing LWCF monies. (Hoyt moved, Stacy seconded).

Mike Golden questioned why this motion was necessary as he felt this was his job. The SMAC explained the group had decided several meetings ago that representatives of the SMAC were not to represent the SMAC as a whole. They could certainly represent their own viewpoint.

Consensus Decision: SMAC members can represent the SMAC at meetings when dealing with LWCF monies.

RMP Update:

Gary Foulkes updated Council members on the stage of the RMP and the Wild and Scenic River and Wilderness plans and how they fit together. He also

explained the Strategy from ICBEMP and how it is to fit in with the current land use planning.

Motion made and seconded to focus on Alternative D and create language we feel like as a group we can all support, and as we come together as a group at the next meeting, we work to have a SMAC preferred alternative with Alternative D being the base. And that we prioritize the Resources/Issues 1. Transportation, 2. Recreation, 3. Wildlife and then after that begin with Air quality and work through the book. (Stacy moved, Tom Harris seconded)

Consensus Decision: Focus on Alternative D and create language we feel like as a group we can all support, and as we come together as a group at the next meeting, we work to have a SMAC preferred alternative with Alternative D being the base. And that we prioritize the Resources/Issues 1. Transportation, 2. Recreation, 3. Wildlife and then after that begin with Air quality and work through the book

Tom Dyer explained that SMAC choices would not be indicated in the Draft EIS itself.

Followup Item: Gary Foulkes to get Strategy document to Jason Miner.

Wilderness – Management Actions & Limits of Acceptable

Change:

Jon Collins reviewed the status of the Wilderness Management Actions and the concerns arising from Limits of Acceptable Change definitions the SMAC created and the constraints that resulted from these. Jon Neeling detailed the issues that have arisen when dealing with these definitions when working with the Management Actions, including issues with signs, trails, and campfires. The Council had a lengthy discussion on the issues that have arisen as well as their reasons for the definitions they created.

Public Comment:

Jessie Laird, a permittee from Plush, talked to the Council about his concerns stemming from ONDA's proposal for new wilderness. He believes this proposal is an effort to link up everything and put even more restrictions on the small rancher as well as to take parts of Lakeview District. It looks to him like ONDA is using the Steens as a jumping off point.

Susie Hammond, Diamond Ranches, Inc., expressed her concern with the proposal from ONDA. She felt when things are to be discussed, it would be good to have something out prior to the meetings, so interested public could be in attendance. She believes the additional ONDA proposal should be rejected because it was a surprise and not timely. Susie has a concern the agency is going back to the way it was doing business before the Act when we have the chance to manage the Mountain uniquely, and that is the only way it can be managed productively.

Charlie Otley, Diamond Rancher and long time resident and user of Steens Mountain, believes the wilderness area needs to be put back into regular public land to ensure wildlife habitat quality plus wildlife would frequent the area. He also cannot see the reason for making trails because by the mere nature of them they create damage. If 50 people go 50 different routes, no damage occurs, but if 50 people go the same route, resource erosion occurs. He also cautioned against building any new trails, because the number of people would increase past that which is desired.

Dale Neubauer introduced himself and gave the Council a bit of his background which included extensive use of motorized vehicles and equipment. He stated he didn't want to tell the Council how to manage the Steens, but rather the problems that the Deschutes, just 100 miles to the west, is experiencing. He detailed the power in the modern-day snowmobiles, the rules governing them, and the lack of regulations on the Forest that would manage their use.

Josh Warburton asked the SMAC to consider leaving the gate on Steens Loop Road open all year, and to make that recommendation to the BLM. He believes any further restriction of access to the Mountain is counter to the Act as well as detrimental not only to those who live in the immediate vicinity of the Mountain, but any who enjoy its attributes.

JohnWitzel, local resident and permittee, described the feedback they had received from their users, expressing concern they had not known they were going to be shut off from the Mountain. He suggested proposals such as ONDA's should be reviewed after the plan has been completed. He urged the Council to manage the Mountain for the majority users, while still keeping in mind those in the minority who wanted the Wilderness experience.

Harold Belisle, Oregon State Office, reiterated to the Council this is the only group covered by FACA who can advise the agency during the land use planning process. He urged SMAC members to ensure they and their constituents comment on both what they don't like about the plan as well as what they like. Both types of comments are extremely important.

Jenny Otley, Diamond Rancher, stated the more land that is locked up, the more the public overuses the remaining available public and private lands.

Dave Harmon, BLM Oregon State Office Wilderness Specialist, clarified any actions that are to be considered must have been analyzed in the Draft EIS.

Tom Dyer asked that people get as much information into the BLM as possible in relation to the WSA proposal. He requested information on roads, seedings, and any other pertinent information. The BLM will go through the in-house information from previous inventories, staff will do onsite investigation, and then

the decision will be made from that information. Dave Harmon reiterated BLM has guidelines they must follow in any Wilderness proposal.

Tom Harris read the letter requesting LWCF monies the Council had decided upon at the beginning of the meeting. No comments were heard, so the Chair signed it and carbon copies will be sent to the Congressional offices.

Implementation EA Status:

Jim Buchanan, Range Management Specialist and Acting Steens Project Manager, updated the Council on the status of the projects analyzed in the Implementation EA

Jim raised BLM's concerns with current funding and available help, it is not feasible to meet the timeframes for fence removal. Council members discussed the different alternatives and what might be done to meet the designated timeframe.

There was expertise provided from those present in the audience regarding packing fence out and doing projects with nonmotorized means. It was indeed possible within the timeframe, and there are people within the community that can handle the job.

Stacy stated when Roaring Spring Ranch is putting out salt, there is an opportunity for the Ranch to haul materials out, if piled conveniently.

Motion made and seconded that SMAC allow BLM to proceed with the most common sense approach for removing this fence within a 3- to 4-year time period or within 3 if that is what it takes. (Harland moved, Hoyt seconded)

Discussion: Jerry requested the motion be withdrawn to give both him and Alice time to go back and discuss these issues with their constituents to determine possible options. One of the things the Council was asked to keep in mind was the changes the Act had made to local business operations.

In order to allow the requested time, Harland agreed to withdraw the motion and Hoyt did too.

Followup item: Alice and Jerry will come back at the next meeting with a proposal on how their groups would like to proceed.

Winter Recreation:

Jon Collins reviewed the current status of the program, how it operates, and the Council's discussions to date. Tom Harris had met with the snowmobilers and reviewed the details of their request.

Discussion: Council members discussed the details of the snowmobilers' proposal, the conflicts in regulations, requirements governing over-the-snow machine use in Wilderness or WSAs, and what certain areas might require to ensure protection of resources.

Motion made and seconded that roads open in the summer are open in the winter and the winter recreation would be on a permit basis similar to what it is now. Non-WSA lands are designated snowmobile play areas and thoughts be put into the plan to mitigate mechanized/motorized and nonmotorized uses. Try to work cross country skiing around snowmobiling. Wilderness area remains closed to snowmobiling. (Stacy moved, Cindy seconded.)

Discussion: Council members discussed possible alternatives for snowmobile use, aspects of historical snowmobile use, restrictions that would be necessary for any present day use, concerns for safety, and the areas that might be available for use.

Jerry reiterated he did not want to increase snowmobile use, but wanted to meet the historical use level.

The Council went off the record to work around the map.

Stacy withdrew his motion with Cindy's agreement

Tomorrow the map will be presented with a motion for the SMAC to adopt concerning the winter recreation program.

March 4, 2003

Introductions:

Dale called the meeting to order and SMAC members introduced themselves, then all others attending did the same.

Review and Approve January Minutes:

Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended (Stacy moved and Dick seconded)

Discussion: Jerry asked people to look at page 10 to ensure the clarity of it. BLM would be inserted on that page to clarify the specific facilitator was not intended as Dale but as a BLM employee to help with specific topics. Harland amended minutes also to include Jason Miner's compliment to Dale concerning his excellent job facilitating.

Consensus Decision: Minutes are approved as amended.

Stacy asked to put Stonehouse Allotment projects on the agenda for late in the day. Jerry would like to discuss the fence removal concerns later in the day as well.

Action Items Review:

SMAC discussed their policy on EAs and decided to leave it as it is.

Winter Recreation Continued:

Council members reviewed the map from yesterday, discussed the possible restrictions on each area, and how these could meet the recreating public's needs. The permit will detail what routes are open to the permit holder to ensure they know what is available. Council members discussed the Moon Hill Road and how it could possibly fit into this.

Motion made and seconded SMAC recommend to the BLM the roads open for winter recreation by snowmobilers and any other kind of across-the-snow mechanized equipment be as indicated on the map drawn at the end of the day yesterday. (Dick moved, Mike Golden seconded)

Discussion: Members discussed the need to include other over-the-snow machines to be able to facilitate backcountry skiers to Rooster Comb.

No objections to motion.

Consensus Decision: Recommend to the BLM the roads open for winter recreation by snowmobilers and any other kind of across-the-snow mechanized equipment be as indicated on the map drawn at the end of the day yesterday.

Motion made and seconded to allow snowmobiling beyond the Nye Cabin to the permissible snow depth, you set the conditions. (Tom Harris moved, Harland seconded.)

Discussion: None

Objection to the motion was heard.

Roll Call Vote: Tom Harris – Yes; Jerry – No; Wanda – No; Cindy - Yes, Stacy – Yes; Mike – No; Jason – No; E Ron – No; Dick – No; Alice – No; Hoyt – Yes; Harland - Yes.

Motion failed for lack of sufficient affirmative votes.

Motion made and seconded to add a third color to indicate nonmechanized winter recreation supported by motorized (with severe limits). Those areas being

from Crows Foot to Rooster Comb and Nye Cabin to 5600 foot on Cold Springs. (Stacy made and Cindy seconded.)

Discussion: Council members discussed how best to meet the need to facilitate skiing, including the safety issues, how they return, and the various types of backcountry skiing.

Objection to the motion was heard.

Roll: Tom Harris - Yes; Jerry - No; Wanda – No; Cindy – Yes; Stacy –Yes; Mike – No; Jason – No; E Ron – Yes; Dick – No; Alice – No; Hoyt – Yes; Harland –Yes.

Motion failed for lack of sufficient affirmative votes.

LAC Discussion:

Motion made that John and Jon take into consideration everything said yesterday, our concerns, make an attempt to revise the action items under chapter 2 to reflect those, and make that a part of what we will discuss next month. (Jerry made)

Dick said he would second it if Jon Neeling and John Collins would note for SMAC where the action item that reflects the LAC zone prevents the BLM from managing as they think is appropriate, so we know where the examples are that were given to us yesterday.

Jerry declined to modify his motion.

The motion failed for lack of second.

Motion made and seconded to revise the management actions on Table 2 under recreation to reflect the work SMAC has already done, reflect that set of recommendations on the zones, and to have BLM anyway they see fit say that under the description of Zone 1 they identify any actions they cannot do including trail boxes, and the analysis for it. (Dick moved and Alice seconded)

Discussion: Council members discussed the differences between the zones they have developed and the management actions the BLM believes are necessary for the RMP. BLM expressed concerns about whether or not the zones would be defensible. Members discussed the best way to approach clarification of the issues, what they would like to see BLM do, and possible means of compromise.

Objection was heard.

Roll Call Vote: Tom Harris - Yes; Jerry - Yes; Wanda - Yes, Cindy - Yes; Stacy - No; Mike - Yes; Jason - Yes; E Ron - Yes; Dick - Yes; Alice - Yes; Hoyt - No; and Harland - No.

Motion carries with sufficient affirmative votes (9).

Decision: BLM to revise the management actions on Table 2 under recreation to reflect the work SMAC has already done, reflect that set of recommendations on the zones and to have BLM anyway they see fit say that under the description of zone 1 they identify any actions they cannot do including trail boxes, and the analysis for it.

Transportation – Categories 1 & 2:

Mark Sherbourne, Natural Resource Specialist, Burns District Andrews Resource Area, informed the Council of the specific items on which he is seeking recommendations. Members discussed how best to identify the roads that should be closed, those that should remain open, how to deal with routes through specially designated areas, possible seasonal closures, as well as the impacts of each of these. Jerry pointed out the Steens Act description of the Transportation Plan required all roads to be closed unless designated open, with justification for such. Mark said that was not BLM's position. Council members decided this part of the meeting (working around the maps) would be open to the audience as well. Of major concern was how to ensure Tribal access without identifying sensitive cultural sites. Tom will be working closely with the Tribe.

Brent addressed the Council to clarify this proposal he brought forward stemmed from the transportation subcommittee, and the request of bringing forward each constituencies' proposals. Brent briefly described some of the reasons considered for the basis of this conservation community's proposal.

Council agreed to let Charlie Otley address the council. He talked about how closing a lot of the roads forces people onto his private roads which makes them into powder. He believes the environmentalists border on hypocritical because they don't care what happens to his land, but want to preserve the public land. The additional use can take a large toll on his private land.

Moved and seconded to leave all the roads open. (Hoyt moved and Tom Harris seconded)

Discussion: Council members discussed how best to determine which roads would be open or closed, and the need to look at it as a landscape perspective as well as the reasons for either the closure or open.

Objection to the motion was heard.

Roll Call Vote: Tom Harris – Yes; Jerry - No; Wanda - Yes; Cindy - Yes; Stacy - Yes; Mike - No; Jason - No; E Ron - Yes; Dick – No; Alice – No; Harland - Yes; Hoyt - Yes

Motion failed due to lack of sufficient affirmative votes.

Susie Hammond asked to go on the record and give the Council some information to help in their deliberations to which the Council agreed. Susie stated the landowners were very concerned about this transportation plan. She felt when the Council was discussing roads affecting private property or permittees, those people should be in the room and be allowed to have their input. She reminded the Council they need to know whether or not any road they are discussing is private property access. Susie raised the issue of cattle trails and how they would be dealt with since they are an integral part of ranching operations. The other issue she reminded the Council to think of in their deliberations is the fact that when roads are closed on public land, the people move to the nearest land, which often times is private ground. The increased pressure is not what private property owners want or need.

The Council went off the record to work around the map.

Meeting was called back to order.

Public Comment:

Susie Hammond, Hammond Ranches, Inc., wanted to recommend SMAC leave the roads in or outside of Wilderness and WSAs alone. They should remain as they currently are. She expressed concern that by closing any roads, SMAC is setting the stage to allow further designations.

Charlie Otley, Diamond area rancher, wanted to reiterate that when one or two parallel roads are closed, the traffic on the remaining open road doubles and increases erosion impacts. His other point was when a road is open for a period and then closed, the public will go down that road to its closure. Once they are there, they can access private or public land. The closures are increasing impacts to private lands by the recreating public.

Josh Warburton, Oregon Hunters, reminded the Council of the review of roads and road closures that took place in the 1980s, and stated at the time the BLM was accused of being over zealous in its closures. Josh talked of the economic hardships facing the local communities, how the Refuge is expanding their operations to include the multiple-use principles including tourism and recreation, as well as their long standing mandate to protect wildlife habitat. All Josh says he hears when it comes to the Steens is restrict, restrict, close, close. He distributed copies of and asked the Council to keep in mind the principles upon which the legislation was founded. Josh stated he is representing the Oregon Hunters Association who recommends the Council defer any further road closures. The map given with the legislation denotes all the roads and their status and that is all that is needed. Josh urged the Council to give it 5-10 years, since the legislation is in its infancy, and to see where we are at the end of that period. If there are certain issues or concerns along the way, then deal with those, but don't penalize the rest of the world for perceived problems. He stated before any RMP was

published the Council should ask for oversight hearings to ensure they are headed in the direction that was intended by the authors of the legislation.

Jerry Miller, rancher, read a letter he drafted and shared his thoughts concerning the Wilderness Study Area. His letter itemized the history of the area, including Pete French's Ranch, the county seat, and the Taylor Grazing Act implications. He talked of the land being grazed for about 130 years on the land that is now wilderness. The struggle with Oregon's economy can be directly related to the environmental restrictions on the State's natural resources. He asked the Council to be sure and keep the people who live on the land there, because they are the true stewards of the land.

Fred Otley, Diamond Rancher, spoke of the aspen areas that have suffered substantial juniper invasion on Steens Mountain. His belief is some of the WSAs previously determined appropriate for wilderness designation should not have been so because of the juniper. The clarity with which FLPMA states the agency cannot knowingly allow watershed conditions to decline. He believes all WSA designations should be reviewed to once more determine their adequacy for designation, because of his belief, that important information was ignored. Fred also believes it is illegal for BLM to consider more WSAs because of the juniper issue and its affect on watershed and Steens Mountain Act requires allowing recreational uses and new WSAs would limit those.

Meeting called to order by Dale after lunch.

Transportation Continued:

Cindy suggested the motion be found where the SMAC voted to keep all these roads category 2 unless they closed them. Jerry agreed to go ahead but wanted to go on record that he doesn't think the way it is being done is according to the requirements of the Act.

This Council will proceed on the premise this group had previously determined all the roads were Category 2's and were now going back to see which ones they want to close.

The process the Council has been using was reviewed and some Council members pointed out the reasons this process wasn't working for them, which included insufficient information to make a decision based on the current on-the-ground issues or concerns.

The Council held lengthy discussions on the roads on the Mountain section by section and discussed the different aspects of leaving each one open or closing it, the impacts that either could have, the known uses, how those uses could continue to be met, and the possibility of closing one-half of the loop if the other half can be maintained.

Motion made and seconded to classify those Maintenance Category 1, except for the three circled ones which would remain closed under the BLM administrative action as of 1980. In addition, the circled one to the far right would be analyzed to be an open road, reversing the closure of 1980. (Stacy moved and Tom Harris seconded)

Motion Clarification: Classify the five routes or portions of routes on the attached maps (3) entitled “SMAC Proposed Closed Routes March 4, 2003” as Maintenance Level 1. These routes are also described as: the route along Tombstone fence; west route to Weaver Place; Three Springs/Steens Loop to Blitzen River route; Tabor Canyon route; and west Bone Creek road segment. Also retain closure of the five routes shown on attached map entitled “SMAC Proposed Closed Route Retention March 4, 2003.” These routes are described as Snowtel access road; Hammond Loop road; Fence Creek road; and Bridge Creek WSA routes (2).

Discussion: None

No objection to the motion was heard

Consensus Decision: Classify those Maintenance Category 1, except for the three circled ones which would remain closed under the BLM administrative action as of 1980. In addition, the circled one to the far right would be analyzed to be an open road, reversing the closure of 1980.

Mark Sherbourne brought up the following subjects, seeking a recommendation from SMAC on each.

- Loop Road - Close any portion?

Council members discussed the impacts of the Loop Road, safety issues, recreational needs, and maintenance requirements.

Motion made and seconded that the Loop Road be a Maintenance Category 5, except Rooster Comb section which will be a Maintenance Category 3. (Stacy moved and Cindy seconded)

Discussion: None

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: The Loop Road be a Maintenance Category 5, except the Rooster Comb section which will be a Maintenance Category 3.

- Loop Road winter access – Where to? Motorized??

Council discussed what the impacts of leaving the gate open would be on the wildlife, the road, the environment in general, the possibility of different permitting requirements, and gate relocation.

Motion made and seconded SMAC recommend the gate stay where it is but ask the BLM to consider other permitted access through the gate during the season when it is closed for activities in addition to motorized winter recreation. **Motion amended** (and second agreed) to include the BLM look into the arrangement which would allow the pickup of a key from a location closer to the gate without giving up BLM's responsibility to ensure the user is consistent with the BLM criteria, in whatever way it might work. (Dick moved and Jerry seconded)

Discussion: None

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: SMAC recommend the gate stay where it is but ask the BLM to consider other permitted access through the gate during the season when it is closed for activities in addition to motorized winter recreation. BLM is to look into the arrangement which would allow the pickup of a key from a location closer to the gate without giving up BLM's responsibility to ensure the user is consistent with the BLM criteria, in whatever way it might work.

Moved and seconded that the language currently Alternative E remain in the RMP as an alternative. (Clarification: Management Action 5E on Page 82 of Chapter 2 Summary Table dated 2/24/03) (Stacy moved and Ron seconded)

Discussion: None

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: the language that is currently in Alternative E remain in the RMP as an alternative.

- Rooster Comb portion of Loop Road

Council members discussed the safety issues, maintenance requirements, and resource impacts this portion of the Loop Road has.

Motion made and seconded that BLM maintain the Rooster Comb section to the highest level of Maintenance Level 3 that is economically feasible, then when it degrades to the lowest point of Maintenance Level 3, if money is available, take it back the highest level of Maintenance Level 3. (Stacy moved and Cindy seconded)

Discussion: Council members expressed confusion as to the meaning of the motion, the concern that improving that section created major safety issues and what would be needed to keep the section within the Level 3 category.

Stacy withdrew his motion, Cindy agreed.

Motion made and seconded that BLM, within the parameters of Level 3 do whatever they want, short of hauling substantial amounts of material. (Stacy moved and Ron seconded)

Discussion: None

Objection was heard.

Roll Call Vote: Jerry – Yes; Wanda - Yes; Cindy - Yes; Jason – Yes; E Ron – Yes; Dick – Yes; Alice - Yes; Hoyt – Yes; Harland – Yes; Tom - No.

Motion carried with sufficient affirmative votes.

Decision: BLM within the parameters of Level 3 do whatever they want, short of hauling substantial amounts of material.

- **Wilderness Roads**

Stacy gave the Council his recollection of the negotiations that took place during the preliminary stages of the legislation to either close or leave specific roads open. Jerry explained there were many wilderness advocates who were unhappy with the roads that remained open and he was representing that point of view. Jerry went on to say some members of the environmental community did not see some of the roads on the table during the discussions and were surprised at the outcome. Council members went off the record to work at the maps.

Motion made and seconded to close the left branch of the upper section of the Bone Creek road cherry stem. (Jerry moved. Mike seconded)

Discussion: Council discussed what had been done during legislation and how this supported those deals. Some concern was expressed the road was only being closed to the public not administrative, so the motion was somewhat unclear.

An objection to the motion was heard.

Jerry withdrew his motion with the second's agreement.

Motion made and seconded that the section of the Bone Creek Road from the Carlson Creek intersection to the top of Whiskey Hill be designated as a service or permit use route and closed to public use. (Stacy moved and Mike seconded)

Discussion: None

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: The section of the Bone Creek Road from the Carlson Creek intersection to the top of Whiskey Hill be designated as a service or permit use route and closed to public use.

Motion made and seconded that the Big Alvord and Grove Creek roads be designated as service or permit use routes and closed to public use. (Jerry moved, Jason Seconded)

Discussion: Hoyt did not want to vote on this motion at this time.

Motion made and seconded that motion be tabled until further information can be gathered and returned at the next meeting. (Stacy moved and Hoyt Seconded)

No objection to motion heard.

Consensus Decision: Motion tabled until further information can be gathered and returned at the next meeting.

Followup Item: Gather further information on these two roads.

Motion made and seconded that the Fish Creek Road be closed. (Jerry moved and Alice seconded)

Discussion: Jerry explained that those on the environmental side are adamant Fish Creek was not part of the negotiation and he is asking for it to be corrected. Stacy reiterated both sides of the negotiations found surprises in the outcome. The Council talked of the access the route provides for recreational access.

Objection to the motion was heard.

Roll Call Vote Tom H - No; Wanda - No; Cindy – No; Mike – No; Jason - Abstain; ERon - No; Dick - No; Hoyt – No; Harland – No; Stacy – No; Jerry - Yes; Alice - Yes.

Motion failed due to insufficient affirmative votes.

- Default to Maintenance Level 2? Have any two tracks?

Council members discussed the various definitions of routes in different documents and what impacts various types of routes have on possible WSA designation, and what constitutes each type of route and the maintenance of them.

Motion made and seconded ways are governed by the IMP, and that all other motorized routes not designated as a Number 1, 3, 4 or 5 default and be considered a Maintenance Level 2. (Stacy made and Cindy seconded)

Discussion: Jerry expressed that eliminating two-tracks could have the effect of permanently disqualifying areas from future consideration as Wilderness Study Areas. Cindy reminded everyone of the motion in an earlier meeting to have all routes category 2 unless closed. Jerry asked that we actually look that motion up. The only reference found (by Karla Bird in the audience) was that a motion to this effect failed.

An objection to the motion was heard.

Roll Call Vote: Tom Harris - Yes; Wanda - Yes; Mike - Yes; Jason – Yes
E Ron - Yes; Dick - Yes; Alice - Yes; Hoyt – Yes; Harland - Yes;
Cindy-Yes; Stacy – Yes; Jerry – No.

Motion carried with sufficient affirmative votes.

- Seasonally Close other Routes within CMPA, Moon Hill?

Members discussed the need to be able to close various routes seasonally depending on the route, the weather and environmental conditions.

Motion made and seconded the BLM place a management action in Alternative D authorizing the BLM to close roads seasonally in order to avoid damage. If it is a seasonal closure, then it would trigger a process to review to see if maintenance or mitigation should be done. (Dick made and Mike seconded)

Discussion: Council members discussed the need to ensure that resource damage does not occur but also to meet the needs of the public to access the various parts of the Mountain.

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: Recommend the BLM place a management action in Alternative D authorizing the BLM to close roads seasonally in order to avoid damage. If it is a seasonal closure, then it would trigger a process to review to see if maintenance or mitigation should be done.

- **Parking of vehicles off the open roads**

Members talked of the different alternatives for pulling vehicles off various types of roads and the amount of space necessary for some of those hauling horse trailers, etc. It was felt that consistency would be of importance.

Motion made and seconded to make a 100 foot wide corridor from the center line (Stacy made and E. Ron seconded)

Discussion: Members were unsure of the level of need for the turn around areas, although it does occur on a regular basis. Some of the base line data is not currently available.

Followup Item: Mark Sherbourne to get the information on the WSA corridor being 10 feet to the SMAC.

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus decision: Make a 100 foot wide corridor from the center line.

Stonehouse Allotment:

Stacy had raised the concern that with ONDA's WSA proposals, the Stonehouse Allotment is still on hold. The permittee had agreed to a 3-year no grazing period but ended up with a 4-year time frame and with this new WSA proposal it could be a great deal longer.

Motion made and seconded the agency resolve the conflict between the approved projects on Stonehouse Allotment and the WSA issue as rapidly as possible. (Stacy moved, Mike seconded)

Discussion: None

No objection to motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: The agency resolve the conflict between the approved projects on Stonehouse Allotment and the WSA issue as rapidly as possible.

April Agenda:

SMAC members expressed concern with the ability to cover as much of the RMP as needed at the next meeting. Concerns were expressed about getting bogged down in the Recreation portion of the RMP.

Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Liz Appelman.

The SMAC approved the March 2003 meeting minutes as amended on April 10, 2003, and further clarified on April 11, 2003.

Certified by:

Tom Harris, SMAC Chair

April 11, 2003

Date